

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 017494

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H:RFLATEN(SUBS)

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TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS SA APER PDIP, USSAEC, MASS, EAID, ETRD, CVIS, PFOR,US

SUBJECT: FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL QUESTIONS FROM CONFIRMATION
HEARING FOR AMB. PORTER

1. SFRC STAFF HAS WRITTEN AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY ENCLOSING
A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO YOU BY SENATOR CASE,
AND INTENDED TO FORM, ALONG WITH YOUR RESPONSES, A PART
OF THE RECORD OF YOUR CONFIRMATION HEARING. YOU WILL
RECALL THAT THE COMMITTEE APPROVED YOUR NOMINATION ON THE
UNDERSTANDING THAT BECAUSE OF THE SHORTNESS OF HEARING
TIME YOU WOULD RESPOND IN WRITING TO ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS
FROM MEMBERS.

2. QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTED REPLIES FOLLOW. WOULD
APPRECIATE YOUR EARLY COMMENTS AND APPROVAL.

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PAGE 02 STATE 017494

3. QUESTION: COULD YOU CLARIFY THE US GOVERNMENT'S
POLICY WITH REGARD TO INDIVIDUALS REFUSED VISAS TO SAUDI
ARABIA BECAUSE OF THEIR RACE, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN
OR SEX? -

PROPOSED REPLY: I BELIEVE THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT OF NOVEMBER 20 ON THIS SUBJECT IS A FULL EXPOSITION OF OUR POLICY. AS THAT STATEMENT POINTS OUT, WE ARE COMMITTED

TO TAKE ACTION THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS IF CASES ARISE WHICH APPEAR TO INVOLVE DISCRIMINATORY EXCLUSION OF USG EMPLOYEES FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, OR AGE. SIMILARLY, AS THE PRESIDENT SAID, IF AN EMPLOYEE OF A FEDERAL CONTRACTOR PERFORMING WORK IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY SUFFERS A DISCRIMINATORY EXCLUSION FROM THAT COUNTRY, THE DEPT OF STATE WILL TAKE DIPLOMATIC ACTION TO ATTEMPT TO GAIN ENTRY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL. IF DISCRIMINATION OF THIS KIND WERE TO OCCUR IN SAUDI ARABIA, I WOULD, OF COURSE, VIGOROUSLY PURSUE SUCH ACTION WITH THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT.

IN A MORE GENERAL WAY, CERTAINLY I WILL BE MAKING AN EFFORT WITH THE SAUDIS TO POINT OUT THAT RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION IS THOROUGHLY REPUGNANT TO US PRINCIPLES. I WILL MAKE IT CLEAR TO THEM THAT ALTHOUGH WE RECOGNIZE THAT CONTROL OF ACCESS TO NATIONAL TERRITORY IS A MATTER OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY -- AND THAT THEY, AS WE, ARE FREE TO DECIDE ON SECURITY GROUNDS WHO MAY OR MAY NOT ENTER THEIR TERRITORY -- WE STRONGLY OBJECT TO PRACTICES WHICH MAY AMOUNT, IN EFFECT IF NOT IN PRINCIPLE, TO RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION.

4. QUESTION: THE SAUDI ARABIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE US SAID IN A NOVEMBER 25, 1975 PRESS STATEMENT THAT ... "SAUDI ARABIA DOES NOT ADMIT ANYONE ADHERING TO ZIONISM, FOR IT IS COMMITTED TO THE SEIZURE AND HOLDING OF OUR TERRITORY AND HOLY PLACES." IN VIEW OF THE CONTACTS WE HAVE HAD WITH THE SAUDIS ON VARIOUS CONTRACTS AND THE DISCRIMINATION ISSUE, WHAT IS YOUR INTERPRETATION OF WHAT THEY MEAN BY "ZIONISTS?"

PROPOSED REPLY: FOR THE RECORD, I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT
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PAGE 03 STATE 017494

THAT THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR'S PRESS RELEASE NOT BE QUOTED IN PART, OR OUT OF CONTEXT. THE FULL TEXT OF THAT STATEMENT, AS I HAVE SEEN IT, READS AS FOLLOWS: QTE: SAUDI ARABIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES, HIS EXCELLENCY SHAIKH ALI ALIREZA, MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1975: SAUDI ARABIA IS MOST INTERESTED IN ATTRACTING QUALIFIED AMERICANS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE AND PROFITABLE PART IN THE MULTIBILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRIALIZED PROGRAM BEING UNDERTAKEN IN THE KINGDOM DURING THE COMING FIVE YEARS.

A RECENT PRESS STORY OUT OF CALIFORNIA THAT SAUDI ARABIA WAS NOT INTERESTED IN RECRUITING BLACKS OR WOMEN HIGHWAY

ENGINEERS IS FALSE; AND ANYONE BELIEVING THE ALLEGATION IS BADLY MISLED.

BLACKS ARE ACTIVE IN EVERY PART OF THE SAUDI ECONOMY AND

AT ALL LEVELS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENDEAVOR. THAT HAS BEEN TRUE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF ISLAM. IT IS STIPULATED IN OUR HOLY BOOK THAT NO DISTINCTION SHALL BE MADE ON RACE OR COLOR.

WOMEN ARE ALREADY ACTIVE IN MANY AREAS OF THE SAUDI ECONOMY, INCLUDING AS MEDICAL DOCTORS AND NURSES, PETROLEUM ENGINEERS, TEACHERS, RESEARCHERS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AVIATION, AND IN A NUMBER OF TEACHER FIELDS. INDEED MANY OF THE WOMEN ARE EMPLOYED BY THE SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT. HISTORICALLY, WOMEN GENERALLY KEPT TO THEIR HOMES RATHER THAN BEING ENGAGED IN OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT BUT JUST AS IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN MOST OTHER SOCIETIES, MORE AND MORE SAUDI WOMEN ARE TAKING UP CAREERS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES IN THE BUILDING OF OUR COUNTRY. THE DEVELOPMENT SPIRIT AT WORK IS ILLUSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT IN THE NEXT ENTERING CLASS IN THE KINGDOM'S MOST RECENT MEDICAL SCHOOL, THERE WILL BE 40 MALE STUDENTS AND 50 WOMEN STUDENTS.

SAUDI ARABIA DOES NOT ADMIT ANYONE DEDICATED TO THE SEIZURE OF OUR LAND AND DESTRUCTION OF OUR SOCIETY ANY MORE THAN DOES THE UNITED STATES OR ANY OTHER NATION.
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PAGE 04 STATE 017494

TO BE SPECIFIC, SAUDI ARABIA DOES NOT ADMIT ANYONE ADHERING TO ZIONISM FOR IT IS COMMITTED TO THE SEIZURE AND HOLDING OF OUR TERRITORY AND HOLY PLACES.

WHILE DETERMINED TO MEET THAT THREAT, SAUDI ARABIA IS EQUALLY DEDICATED TO MOVING VIGOROUSLY AHEAD WITH ITS OWN ECONOMIC, EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT. IT BOTH NEEDS AND WANTS AMERICANS AND OTHER FRIENDLY PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE FREE WORLD TO HELP IN THAT CHALLENGE.

IN THE MEANTIME, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT FALSE AND MALICIOUS STORIES DELIBERATELY OR UNWITTINGLY BEING SPREAD, BE CORRECTED AND STOPPED. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE IS NEED TO MOVE PROMPTLY TOWARD AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE OF THAT REGION AND FOR THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND ECONOMY.
UNQTE.

I THINK IT IS CLEAR FROM THE FOREGOING THAT SAUDI ARABIA VIEWS ITS VISA POLICIES AS BEING BASED ON NATIONAL

SECURITY GROUNDS, RATHER THAN ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS. CONSEQUENTLY, THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE TERM "ZIONIST" EMPHASIZES THE POLITICAL, RATHER THAN THE RELIGIOUS ASPECT. THAT IS MY PERSONAL CONCLUSION FROM A SIMPLE

READING OF THEIR STATEMENTS, AND FROM SOME FAMILIARITY WITH OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH SAUDI GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES ON THIS ISSUE; OBVIOUSLY THE DEFINITIVE INTERPRETATION WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM THE SAUDIS THEMSELVES.

5. QUESTION: IF THEY MEAN JEWS, HOW DO YOU PLAN TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM RAISED BY THEIR EFFORTS TO HAVE US GO ALONG WITH DISCRIMINATION AGAINST OUR OWN CITIZENS?

PROPOSED REPLY: AS I INDICATED ABOVE, I AM NOT AT ALL SURE THAT THE SAUDIS DO EQUATE THE TERM "ZIONISTS" WITH THE TERM "JEWS." IN ANY CASE, AS THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT MAKES CLEAR, THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT CONDONE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ITS CITIZENS. THE LAWS OF THE US REQUIRE THAT AMERICANS BE HIRED FOR JOBS AND ASSIGNED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 05 STATE 017494

POSITIONS IN A NON-DISCRIMINATORY WAY, WHICH I BELIEVE MEANS, IN THE CASE OF JOBS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES, WITHOUT REGARD TO DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES OF THOSE COUNTRIES. AS I INDICATED ABOVE, THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT OF NOV 20 SAYS CLEARLY THAT WE WILL TAKE DIPLOMATIC ACTION ON BEHALF OF ANY EMPLOYEE OF THE US GOVERNMENT ASSIGNED TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY, OR OF A FEDERAL CONTRACTORS PERFORMING WORK IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY, IF THE EMPLOYEE SUFFERS DISCRIMINATORY EXCLUSION FROM THAT COUNTRY. I WOULD ALSO BE FULLY PREPARED TO MAKE EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF PRIVATE AMERICANS WHO HAD BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BY SAUDI ARABIA, IF SUCH CASES ARISE.

6. QUESTION: HOW MANY AMERICAN JEWS, BLACKS AND WOMEN HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO WORK IN SAUDI ARABIA? ARE THERE ANY SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF WOMEN WORKING OUTSIDE THE MEDICAL AND TEACHING FIELDS?

PROPOSED REPLY: I HAVE NO RECORDS AVAILABLE TO ME WHICH WOULD PERMIT A COMPREHENSIVE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION, AND IT IS MY IMPRESSION THAT FEDERAL RECORDS GENERALLY DO NOT INDICATE THE RACE OR RELIGION OF EMPLOYEES. NOR DO I HAVE ACCESS TO SUCH RECORDS FOR PRIVATE FIRMS, IF THEY EXIST. I HAVE ON MY STAFF AT THE EMBASSY A VERY COMPETENT FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER WHO IS BLACK, WHO IS DOING A SUPERB JOB, AND WHO IS FULLY ACCEPTED BY THE SAUDIS -- AND WHO, MOREOVER, IS WORKING WITH THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT IN THE SENSITIVE FIELD OF POLITICO-MILITARY RELATIONS. I AM TOLD THAT THE

TREASURY DEPARTMENT EMPLOYS A WOMAN OFFICER IN CONNECTION WITH ITS IMPLEMENTATION OF JOINT SAUDI-US ECONOMIC COMMISSION MATTERS, AND THAT SHE HAS WORKED FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME IN SAUDI ARABIA, AGAIN WITH THE FULL ACCEPTANCE AND COOPERATION OF THE SAUDIS. I

UNDERSTAND THAT A NUMBER OF EXPERTS WHO HAVE COME TO SAUDI ARABIA IN CONNECTION WITH THAT JOINT COMMISSION HAVE BEEN OF JEWISH FAITH, BUT AGAIN WE WOULD NOT KNOW THAT FOR CERTAIN UNLESS THE INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS THE INFORMATION.

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PAGE 06 STATE 017494

I ASSUME THE SECOND PART OF THIS QUESTION REFERS TO SAUDI WOMEN WORKING OUTSIDE THE MEDICAL AND TEACHING FIELDS. I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER, AT LEAST NOT YET. IT WILL BE AN INTERESTING POINT TO OBSERVE DURING MY TIME IN SAUDI ARABIA, BECAUSE, AS THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT ABOVE INDICATES, WOMEN ARE ALSO ACTIVE IN PETROLEUM ENGINEERING, AVIATION, AND SO FORTH. THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN SAUDI ARABIA IS RELATED TO THE SAUDI WISH TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY RAPIDLY. SOCIAL CHANGE OF THIS KIND, ESPECIALLY IN A VERY CONSERVATIVE AND TRADITION SOCIETY SUCH AS SAUDI ARABIA, TAKES A LONG TIME AND IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO OBSERVE HOW QUICKLY AND HOW WELL THIS ASPECT OF MODERNIZATION PROCEEDS IN SAUDI ARABIA.

7. QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD JOINT EFFORTS REGARDING SAUDI DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN WHICH AMERICAN ENTERPRISES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES ARE INVOLVED? IS IT WISE TO COMMIT SO MUCH EFFORT WHEN SAUDI ARABIA DISCRIMINATES AGAINST AMERICAN COMPANIES ON THE BASIS OF WHETHER THEY DO BUSINESS WITH ISRAEL OR AGAINST INDIVIDUALS BECAUSE THEY ARE JEWISH?

PROPOSED REPLY: I AM IN FAVOR OF INCREASED COOPERATION BETWEEN SAUDI DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, ON THE ONE HAND, AND US COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, ON THE OTHER. I BELIEVE SUCH COOPERATION IS IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST FOR SEVERAL REASONS:

-- FIRST, IT STRENGTHENS THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND THAT IN TURN IS VITAL TO BOTH OUR OBJECTIVE OF MOVING TOWARD A PERMANENT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND TO OUR OBJECTIVES IN THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AND FINANCIAL FIELDS;

-- SECOND, IT IS OF VERY SUBSTANTIAL -- AND GROWING -- BENEFIT TO OUR BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, OUR TRADE PROMOTION EFFORTS, AND ULTIMATELY OUR DOMESTIC ECONOMIC INTERESTS;

-- THIRD, MORE AND MORE CONTACT, AND DEEPER TIES, BETWEEN SAUDIS AND AMERICANS CAN HELP THE PROCESS OF MODERNIZATION WHICH IS ALREADY UNDER WAY IN SAUDI ARABIA.
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PAGE 07 STATE 017494

MODERNIZATION IN TURN SHOULD BRING WITH IT A CHANGE OF OUTLOOK, OF ATTITUDE, WHICH IN THE LONG RUN STANDS A FAIR

CHANCE OF ELIMINATING SOME OF THE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR SOCIETIES -- DIFFERENCES SUCH AS THOSE WITH REGARD TO THE PROPER ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY.

WITH RESPECT TO THE SECOND PART OF THE QUESTION, OBVIOUSLY SUCH ACTIVITY MUST BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OUTLINED IN THE PRESIDENT'S NOVEMBER 20 STATEMENT.

8. QUESTION: AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE LATEST PEACE-HAWK CONTRACT WOULD RESULT IN US PERSONNEL BEING STATIONED AT A BASE NEAR THE SAUDI BORDER WITH YEMEN. THE BASE REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN USED IN THE PAST BY BRITISH MERCENARIES FLYING BRITISH-MADE PLANES. WILL THE US IN ITS SUPPORT FOR THE F-5 AIRCRAFT, BECOME INDIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SUPPORTING SAUDI MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST LEFTIST REGIMES SOUTH OF HER BORDER?

PROPOSED REPLY: THE SO-CALLED "PEACE HAWK" PROGRAM PROVIDES FOR SAUDI PURCHASE, AND US SUPPORT, OF F-5 AIRCRAFT. FOR SOME TIME A NUMBER OF F-5'S HAVE, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, BEEN BASED AT KHAMIS MUSHAYT IN SOUTHERN SAUDI ARABIA. I KNOW NOTHING OF ANY USE OF THAT BASE BY BRITISH MERCENARIES FLYING BRITISH-MADE PLANES, AND INQUIRIES WITH MEMBERS OF MY STAFF HERE REVEAL NOTHING ALONG THAT LINE. NOR AM I, OR ARE THEY, AWARE OF ANY SAUDI MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST HER NEIGHBORS, LEFTIST OR OTHERWISE. I WOULD NOT WANT TO PRE-JUDGE WHAT OUR POLICY MIGHT BE WERE SUCH A CONFLICT TO DEVELOP; THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WE WOULD SUPPORT SAUDI ARABIA, AND SPECIFICALLY WHETHER WE WOULD PERMIT US SUPPORT OF SAUDI F-5'S TO CONTINUE, WOULD OBVIOUSLY DEPEND ON THE SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES.

9. QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE LONG-TERM PROSPECTS FOR STABILITY IN SAUDI ARABIA AS THE COUNTRY TRIES TO ABSORB THE WEALTH CREATED BY ITS OIL RESOURCES?

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PAGE 08 STATE 017494

PROPOSED REPLY: VERY GOOD, ON THE BASIS OF WHAT I HAVE
SEEN THUS FAR.

10. QUESTION: DO YOU THINK SAUDI ARABIA WILL NEED
PLANES MORE SOPHISTICATED THAN THE F-5 FOR PURELY SELF-
DEFENSE PURPOSES? WHY ARE THE SAUDIS INTERESTED IN
BUYING F-15 JET FIGHTERS AND WOULD YOU SUPPORT SUCH A
SALE?

PROPOSED REPLY: I UNDERSTAND THAT THE SURVEY OF THE
SAUDI ARMED FORCES WHICH WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE DEFENSE

DEPARTMENT IN 1974 RECOMMENDED THAT THE SAUDIS SEEK A
REPLACEMENT FOR THEIR PRESENT FIRST-LINE INTERCEPTOR,
THE BRITISH-BUILT LIGHTNING, OF WHICH THEY NOW HAVE ABOUT
40. THESE AIRCRAFT AS I UNDERSTAND IT WILL END THEIR
USEFUL SERVICE LIFE IN ABOUT 1978. I UNDERSTAND THE
SAUDIS ARE SERIOUSLY LOOKING AT WHAT KINDS OF AIRCRAFT
MIGHT BE AVAILABLE TO REPLACE THE LIGHTNINGS. I WOULD
NOT WANT TO COMMENT ON WHETHER I WOULD OR WOULD NOT
SUPPORT A HYPOTHETICAL SAUDI REQUEST FOR THE F-15, OR
A HYPOTHETICAL SAUDI REQUEST FOR ANY OTHER REPLACEMENT
AIRCRAFT. CLEARLY ANY SUCH REQUEST, SHOULD IT MATERIAL-
IZE, WOULD DESERVE CAREFUL STUDY, AND I CAN ASSURE YOU
THAT AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED IT WOULD RECEIVE SUCH
ATTENTION. SISCO

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